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ACTION HA-06

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SP-02 SPRS-02 /061 W

R 151856Z MAR 82  
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2762

BUENOS AIRES 1467

E.O. 12065: GDS 3/15/88 (FRIEDMAN, T.B.) OR-P  
TAGS: SHUM, AR  
SUBJECT: GOA MORE FORTHCOMING ON DISAPPEARED

1. ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT'S POSITION ON THE PROBLEM OF THE DISAPPEARED HAS CHANGED SIGNIFICANTLY. PREVIOUSLY THE GOVERNMENT TENDED TO STONEWALL THE ISSUE, WHEN IT ADDRESSED IT AT ALL. IT SAID, IN ESSENCE, THAT IT HAD NO INFORMATION TO OFFER ON THE FATE OF THE MISSING.

2. (U) NOW, HOWEVER, THE GOVERNMENT IS PROMISING TO MAKE AVAILABLE WHAT INFORMATION IT CAN ON THE FATE OF THE MISSING. THIS OFFER WAS FIRST PUT FORTH BY INTERIOR MINISTER ALFREDO OSCAR SAINT JEAN, IN A MARCH 8 PRESS INTERVIEW. SAINT JEAN REPORTEDLY STATED THAT, "IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL PUBLISH THOSE CASES THAT IT HAS BEEN POSSIBLE TO CLEAR UP." THE MINISTER'S GUARDED COMMENTS IN THAT INTERVIEW, AND A SUBSEQUENT BACKGROUND INTERVIEW OFFERED BY AN ANONYMOUS INTERIOR MINISTRY SOURCE TO "LA NACION," GIVE A PRETTY CLEAR IDEA OF WHAT THE GOA HAS IN MIND. IT APPEARS THAT THE GOA IS CONSIDERING OFFERING FAMILY MEMBERS THE INFORMATION IT HAS ON CASES IN WHICH (A) THE REPORTED DISAPPEARED PERSON DIED IN CONFRONTATION WITH

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SECURITY FORCES, AND (B) THE ALLEGED DISAPPEARED PERSON IS LIVING ABROAD. APPARENTLY, TOO, THE MINISTRY WOULD

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ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IP6

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

(X) Release ( ) Excise ( ) Deny

Exemption(s):

Declassify: ( ) In Part (X) In Full

( ) Classify as ( ) Extend as ( ) Downgrade to

Date Declassify on Reason

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EXAMINE EACH CASE OF REPORTED DISAPPEARANCE AT THE REQUEST OF LIVING RELATIVES TO DETERMINE IF IT HAS ANY INFORMATION ON THEM. THE MINISTRY SPECIFICALLY REJECTS THE POSSIBILITY OF PUBLISHING SOME SORT OF "LIST" OF THE DISAPPEARED.

3. [REDACTED] COMMENT: THE INTERIOR MINISTRY FOR SEVERAL YEARS HAS HAD AN OFFICE TO WHICH RELATIVES OF THE DISAPPEARED DIRECT THEIR INQUIRIES. THE INVITABLE ANSWER THEY GET BACK HAS BEEN THAT THE INDIVIDUAL IN QUESTION IS NOT IN DETENTION. IT MAY BE THAT NOW THE GOA WILL PROVIDE FAMILY MEMBERS WITH INFORMATION WHEN IT CAN DEMONSTRATE THAT THE PERSON DIED IN COMBAT, AS WE HAD HEARD BEFORE, OR IS LIVING ABROAD. WHILE THE NUMBERS IN BOTH CATEGORIES ARE PROBABLY SMALL, GOA ACTION TO CLARIFY SUCH CASES WOULD BE A POSITIVE EFFORT TO HELP DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM OF THE DISAPPEARED. SHLAUDEMAN

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